

Washington, DC - Rep. Linda Sánchez (D-CA) sent a letter to top appropriations officials in Congress urging them to fund the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) with at least the \$400 million appropriated in fiscal year 2009.

“I had high hopes this Administration would have been more generous to the SCAAP program in its budget proposal,” said Rep. Linda Sánchez. “It is ironic that California, which is already spending billions of dollars it doesn’t have to incarcerate undocumented persons in severely overcrowded prisons and jails, would be forced into a bigger budget deficit if SCAAP is terminated.”

The letter, signed by Sánchez and 22 other congressional members, was sent to Reps. David Obey and Jerry Lewis, the top Democrat and Republican on the House Appropriations Committee, and Reps. Alan Mollohan and Frank Wolf, the top Democrat and Republican on the House Subcommittee on Science, Justice, Commerce and Related Agencies.

“When the former President tried to scrap SCAAP funding, I fought to make sure the program was funded, and I will do it again,” said Sánchez. “It is important that California taxpayers don’t bear the entire burden of housing criminal aliens, when it should be the responsibility of the federal government.”

The Obama administration’s proposed budget would end payments for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. SCAAP provides federal payments to states and localities to reimburse them for incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens with at least one felony or two misdemeanor convictions for violations of state or local law, and incarcerated for at least four consecutive days during the reporting period.